

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 13315

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, TH, MARR

SUBJECT: BASE COMMUNITY RELATIONS AFTER THE BOMBING HALT

FOLLOWING CABLE SENT ACTION BANGKOK INFO CO 388TH TFW KORAT
CO 56TH SOW NAKHON PHANOM CO 8TH TFW UBON AUG 25 FM UDORN
RPTD FOR YOUR INFO:

QUOTE

UDORN 095

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGE: PINS, TH, MARR

SUBJECT: BASE COMMUNITY RELATIONS AFTER THE BOMBING HALT

1. SUMMARY: WE VISITED NAKHON PHANOM (NKP), UBON, AND KORAT AFTER
AUG 15 TO TALK WITH THAI AND AMERICAN OFFICIALS ABOUT REACTION TO
BOMBING HALT AND FUTURE OF BASE COMMUNITY RELATIONS.

2. ALL BASES EXPERIENCING RECENT INCREASE IN THEFT ON BASE BY LOCAL
EMPLOYEES. THIS PARTLY BECAUSE OF RUMORS THAT BASES WILL SOON CLOSE
WITH THAI TRYING TO GET ALL THEY CAN BEFORE IT GOES. EMPLOYEES ALSO
LESS CONCERNED WITH MAINTAINING GOOD PERSONNEL RECORDS WHICH EARLIER
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HAD DETERRED THEFT SOMEWHAT.

3. ALL BASES CONSIDERING SWITCHING FROM 7 DAY WORK WEEK TO 6 OR 5 AND A HALF DAYS. MARINES AT NAM PHONG HAVE ALREADY GONE TO SHORTER WEEK. BASES ALSO INCREASING RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES SUCH AS TOURS, SPORTS, AND EDUCATION. THAI OFFICIALS ANTICIPATE PROBLEMS WITH MORE GI'S ON LIBERTY COMING TO TOWN, BUT APPRECIATE EFFORTS OF BASE OFFICIALS TO KEEP GI'S OCCUPIED. THAI UNDERSTANDABLY CURIOUS ABOUT FUTURE OF BASES BUT ACCEPT AIR FORCE EXPLANATION THAT NO INFORMATION CURRENTLY AVAILABLE. END SUMMARY.

4. NKP: BASE HAS HAD GREAT INCREASE IN THEFT IN RECENT WEEKS. WING COMMANDER, CHIEF SECURITY POLICE, DEPUTY GOVERNOR AOD DISTRICT OFFICER ALL ATTRIBUTE THIS TO RUMORS OF BASE CLOSING. DEPUTY GOVERNOR ESTIMATED 1,000 PEOPLE WOULD BE UNEMPLOYED IF BASE CLOSED, BUT MOST NOT FROM NKP AND WOULD PRESUMABLY RETURN TO LARGER CITIES THEY ORIGINALLY CAME FROM. MOST NIGHTCLUB AND MASSAGE PARLOR OWNERS AND EMPLOYEES WHO WOULD BE AFFECTED ALSO NOT FROM NKP. MAJORITY BAR GIRLS WOULD RETURN TO VILLAGES. WING COMMANDER SAID TRAINING INCREASED TO OFFSET LOSS OF COMBAT MISSION AND THOUGHT BASE WOULD MOVE TO 5 AND A HALF OR 6 DAY WEEK IN NEAR FUTURE. HE PLANNING TO ARRANGE TOURS TO PLACES LIKE BANGKOK AND CHIANG MAI TO KEEP GI'S BUSY. ALSO CONTEMPLATING BUILDING 9 HOLE GOLF COURSE AS WELL AS VEGETABLE GARDENING TO GIVE TROOPS MORE TO DO.

5. DEPUTY GOVERNOR AND DISTRICT OFFICER (DO) SAID AS YET NO NEW PROBLEMS WITH MORE GI'S DOWNTOWN. BOTH EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER GI DRESS ESPECIALLY "MUSCLE SHIRTS" AND GI'S IMPROPERLY RIDING IN SAMLAWS. SURVEY OF BARS EVENING OF AUGUST 17 REVEALED THAT LOITERING AND "DAPPING" IN FRONT OF BLUE NOTE BAR CONTINUES. THAI HAD COMPLAINED

ABOUT THIS IN THE PAST.

6. UBON: WE ATTENDED BASE COMMUNITY RELATIONS (BCR) MEETING IN UBON AUGUST 20. AS IN NKP UBON HAS INCREASED TRAINING AND PLANS TRAVEL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES TO KEEP TROOPS BUSY AFTER BOMBING HALT. PROVINCIAL POLICE CHIEF SAID HE APPRECIATED AIR FORCE EFFORTS TO KEEP GI'S OUT OF TROUBLE IN TOWN AND PLEDGED FULL COOPERATION IN WHAT BE THOUGHT MIGHT BE DIFFICULT PERIOD AHEAD. FOR INSTANCE UBON POLICE RECENTLY WORKED WITH USAF OFFICE SPECIAL INVESTIGATION TO ARREST TWO DRUG PUSHERS. POLICE CHIEF HOPED PROBLEMS WOULD NOT INCREASE
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BUT MENTIONED TO US AFTER BCR MEETING THAT NIGHT BEFORE GI WAS SERIOUSLY STABBED WHILE RIDING IN SAMLAW WITH TWO GO GO GIRLS ENROUTE TO HOTEL. HE NOT SURE IF THIS A SIGN OF THINGS TO COME.

7. AT BCR MEETING COL SOM, MILITARY ADVISOR TO GOVERNOR, SAID SECURITY POLICE SHOULD NOT RIDE AROUND TOWN IN JEEPS WITH FEET UPON FENDERS AS THIS OFFENSIVE TO THAI AND HELPED CT PROPAGANDA WHICH SAYS US DESTROYING THAI CULTURE. BASE OFFICIALS SAID THEY

WOULD CORRECT SITUATION.

8. DISCUSSIONS WITH LEADING CHINESE MERCHANT VICHIAN OWNER OF CHINA GATE RESTAURANT REVEALED THAT MERCHANTS ALREADY PREPARING FOR INEVITABLE DRAW DOWN. VICHIAN SAID MOST RESTAURANT OWNERS FROM BANGKOK WHERE THEY ALSO HAVE BUSINESSES AND WILL THEREFORE NOT BE SERIOUSLY HURT BY WITHDRAWALS. HOTEL, NIGHTCLUB, AND MASSAGE PARLOR OWNERS MAINLY FROM UBON WILL BE MORE SERIOUSLY HURT. VICE GOVERNOR SAID HE THOUGHT BASE CLOSURE LESS A THREAT TO ECONOMY IN UBON THAN IN NKP OR UDORN SINCE UBON A REGIONAL CENTER NOT WHOLLY DEPENDENT ON AIR FORCE.

9. KORAT: THAI AND U.S. OFFICIALS IN KORAT SHARE VIEW OF THOSE IN NKP AND UBON. AIR FORCE TAKING SIMILAR STEPS TO INCREASE TRAINING, TRAVEL, AND RECREATION. GOVERNOR ASKED ABOUT WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS, BUT SAID KORAT LIKE UBON A CITY IN ITS OWN RIGHT AND WOULD BE LESS AFFECTED BY CLOSURES THAN UDORN OR NKP. NEITHER THAI NOR U.S. OFFICIALS THOUGHT INCIDENTS INVOLVING GI'S IN TOWN HAD INCREASED YET. BUT FELT IT LIKELY IN FUTURE. SECRETARY OF CHINESE BOARD OF TRADE IN KORAT SAID BUSINESS WOULD NOT BE SERIOUSLY AFFECTED SINCE THEY HAVE GONE THROUGH BASE CLOSURE BY USARSUPHAI BEFORE AND ARE WELL PREPARED. BROH-KAHN

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